

PIETY demanded.

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A very plain and brief

ESSAY,

To demand PIETY from ALL PEOPLE,

More especially from

YOUNG PEOPLE;

And to direct the ANSWERS that
are to be returned unto the DE-
MANDS.

Deliver'd unto an Assembly of YOUNG
PEOPLE, associated for the Inten-
tions of

Early Piety.

In the CITY of BOSTON; 8d. Vm. 1716.

Religio qua friget, non est Religio.

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The Demands of P I E T Y.

1 King. XVIII. 21.

The People answered him not a Word.

THE Silence of the People was a very speaking Thing. We will Enquire after the Language of it; and observe what may be spoken to us in it. The Israelites were Infamous for a Disposition to Idolatry. In the Ten Tribes, after their Defection from the House of David, this Disposition had strong Temptations to Cherish it, and Exert it. And yet they had something within them, which was not without Convictions, or Suspicions, that it was a very Evil One.

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Under the power of this Light, there were many Thousands, who still retained their Allegiance and Fidelity to the Blessed JEHOVAH, and had not *bowed their Knees to Baal*. The People were very Scandalous for their *Uncertainty* in Religion. While they were in this Condition, the Glorious GOD raises up a Great Prophet, and Qualifies him, & Commissions him, to attempt a *Reformation* of the People, and a *Recovery* of them from their *Idolatry*. It was the Memorable Prophet *Elijah*. A vast Congregation of the People was now assembled; and above Eight Hundred of their *Wicked Clergy*, the *Worst* and the *Source* of all their *Plagues*, made a Part of the Assembly. *Elias* now in the Name of his GOD, makes a Demand upon the Congregation; *How long halt ye, between Two Opinions?* There is an Elegancy in the Original. 'Tis an Elegant Allusion to a *Bird* on a *Tree*, flying from one *Bough* to another; unresolved, what *Bough* to stay upon. Such was the *Uncertainty* of the People! But, says the Man of GOD, Let either the Blessed JEHOVAH be entirely adhær'd unto; or else let us have some evident Proofs that *Baal* is the Almighty GOD, and then wee'l adhere to him. Let us be *Resolv'd* upon something

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thing or other; and no longer continue in any *Uncertainty*. My Text reports the Answer of the People unto the Demand made by the Inspir'd Messenger of God. Their Answer was,——*Nothing at all.*——*The People answered not a Word.* If it be Enquired, Why they did not *Answer*, I that was none of them, will presume to answer for them. A Twofold *Reason* is to be given for their Silence. One is, Because they could give *no Reason* for their Practice. They might be *Ashamed* of what they had done. I don't wonder they *said nothing*. They had *nothing to say*. They could make no Apology. Another is, Because they were yet *Unresolved*; yet *Uncertain* what they should Resolve upon: Yet *Undetermined*; Not fixed in any *Determination*, what to do.

My DOCTRINE will be one which, methinks, Mankind should be aware of a sharp *Satyr* in it, when they hear it insisted on.

It is no rare Thing, for People to be Unresolved, What Answer they shall make to the Demands of the Glorious GOD.

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The Glorious GOD has Demands upon People. And unto His Demands, *the People answer Him not a Word.* First the *Cases* wherein, and then the *Causes* wherefore, this comes to pass, may be spoken to. When you are told, what are the *Cases*, in which People do not *answer a Word* unto the Demands of the Glorious GOD, you will be told at the same time, the *Causes* for which People do not *answer*.

First; The Glorious GOD has this Demand upon People, *What have you done?* He calls them to an Account, *What they have been doing?* We read, Matth. XXV. 19. *The Lord of the Servants, cometh and reckoneth with them.* Unto this Demand, People do not *answer a Word*; It is because they *Durst not answer.* They have done very much *Amisß.* They can give no good Account of what they have done. All the Answer they can make, will confess, *That they have sinned, and have done very foolishly.* It will imply, *That the Wrath of God, which comes on the Children of Disobedience, will belong to them for what they have done.*

Secondly; The Glorious GOD has this Demand upon People, *What will you do?* He expects them to take up an Immutable Purpose, *What they will do in the things which*
be

he would have them to do. We read, Psal. XIV. 2. *The Lord looks down from Heaven, upon the Children of Men, to see if there be any who understand and seek God; and so, If there be any that will seek Him. Unto this Demand, People do not answer a Word; It is because they Will not answer. They are loth to come to a full Purpose. They are not willing to do, what they ought to do; They cannot conquer their Aversion for what they are called unto. If they give an Answer, it must be such an one, as will oblige them, To do what they have no mind to do. It will compel them, To continue no longer as they are.*

Having laid in this *General Idea* of the Matter, there are now Two Designs before us, to be prosecuted. There is a Twofold EXHORTATION to be managed.

I. Let no People be any longer *Unresolved*, what Answer to make unto the Demands of the Glorious GOD, about what they have *Already done*. A Caution against *Unreasonable Impiety*, is what all People are to be press'd unto; A Caution against *Unaccountable Impiety*. It will contain in it also a Caution against, a Senseless, a Careless, a Criminal *Uncertainty* of our own Condition before the Lord. Oh! Let not our People,

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People, so *Misbehave* themselves, that when GOD shall Demand, *What have you done?* And, *Why have you so done?* it may not be so with them, That they shall *not have a Word to answer* for themselves. Let our *Behaviour* be such, that when God shall Demand, How it has been, Our *Answer* may not be such, as cannot without Blushing or Trembling be made unto Him. Of one who was an *Intruder* upon the Favours of God, it was demanded; *How camest thou in hither?* And we read; Matth. XXII. 12. *He was speechless.* Most certainly, one who does not Regard the Voice of God, and the Rule of a Rational Creature, when God shall demand, *What he has done*, will in a very wretched manner stand *Speechless* before Him; *not answer a Word.*

First. Remember this; There will be a *Day of Judgment*; There will be a Day in which God will bring every *Work into Judgment*; There will be a Day in which God will Judge the World, by that Man whom He has Raised from the Dead, and by whom He will Raise the Dead. We may all depend upon that; Rom. XIV. 12. Every one of us shall give an *Account of himself unto God*. Not one of us can escape; *The Small and Great shall stand before God.* *The Angels* will be *Officers*

Officers that shall bring us all into the Presence of our GOD the Judge of all. God will then make this Demand upon us; *What have you been doing in the Body?* It is a Thing to be earnestly Inculcated upon us. Let the sense of this be always kept alive in our Minds. Let us be so sensible, of a Judgment to come, that we may be furnished with a comfortable Answer to what shall then be demanded of us. 'Tis the care of a Godly Man; Job XXXI. 14. *What shall I do when God riseth up? and when He visiteth, what shall I answer Him?*

Secondly. Apprehend this; In the meantime, there is a Tribunal of God; in the Conscience of Man. We read, Rom. II. 15. *They shew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts; their Conscience also bearing Witness; and their Thoughts in the mean time accusing or excusing.* God has Enkindled a Light in the Conscience of Man. A Lamp of God it is, that shall never be extinguished. God acts in it. God is here as upon a Judgment-Seat, and God here makes His Demand, *What have you been doing, and what will be the Fruit of your Doings?* In this Apprehension, Oh! Let no Man do any thing, but what he can Answer to his Conscience for the doing of it. Let no Man incur the Rebukes & Scourges of

of his Conscience in what he does. Man, Thy Conscience utters those Thunders to thee; Job XXXIII. 5, 6. *If thou canst answer me, stand up. Behold, I am in God's stead. You cannot be unresolved in your Minds, whether these Things be Right or no.*

But now, under the Awe of these Considerations, let us get ready a Good Answer, to the Demands of God. Instead of, *Not answering a Word*, let us become able to Answer Two Things. The One is relating to what is past *before* this Day; The Other is relating to what is to come *after* this Day.

First. Become Resolved, that you shall be able to answer this; *Lord, I have with a Repenting Faith sought the Pardon of my doing what I ought not to have done. A Repenting Believer is a pardoned one; And such an one appearing before God, will not be one of that People, who to His Demands cannot answer a Word.* While the Transgressor had not made sure of a Pardon, he could say nothing for himself; Of such an one, we have that Report; Psal. XXXII. 3, 4. *I kept Silence; Thy Hand was heavy upon me.* But a pardoned Sinner has a great deal to say. Let us make sure of a Pardon for our Miscarriages; And the Things that we have done to ensure our Pardon, will afford

us the *best Answer*, that can be made, when we appear before the Lord. We can *answer* nothing in Defence of our Sins, but Repentance will enable us to *answer* something in our own Defence, when we have sinned. Oh! Become able to *answer* this; Lord, I have Confessed and Bewailed my Sins, with unspeakable Sorrow for my Offending of thy Infinite Majesty. Become able to *answer* this; Lord, I have desired that all my Sins might be entirely forsaken, and that the Inclinations thereunto might be destroy'd in my Soul. Become able to *answer* this; Lord, I have presented before the Justice of Heaven, the Sacrifice of my Saviour, as a full Atonement for my Sins; and I have pleaded for my Pardon, the Blood which cleanses from all Sins. When we are impleaded for our Sins, before the Throne of God, we cannot *answer* for one of a Thousand. But, Oh! Happy we, if we may plead this; My SAVIOUR has answered for me.

Secondly. Become Resolved, that you shall be able to *answer* this; Lord, Having Repented of my Former Sins, I Laboured then to do all that I knew I ought to do. Without a sincere Labour to *answer* the Commands of God, we can make no Answer to His Demands, at our appearing before Him; The People who persist in a wilful Disobedience

to God, are they who *cannot answer a Word*. A Man solicitous to have something to say, at the *Resurrection of the Dead*, both of the *Just and Unjust*, steer'd this Course for it; *Act. XXIV. 16. I exercise myself, to have always a Conscience void of Offence toward God, and toward Men*. Be afraid ever to appear before God, without being able to say, That we have counted His *Præcepts concerning all Things to be Right*, and hated every *False Way that is Condemned in them*, and had *Respect unto all His Commandments*. When your Conduct in the World comes to be answered for, your sincere Labour to stand Complete in the whole Will of God, will be necessary to be brought as an Evidence that you have had the *Righteousness of your SAVIOUR to Justify you*. If you have the *Righteousness of a SAVIOUR* and a Surety to answer for you, it will be proved, by your having *Labour'd after such a Good Conversation in Christ*, as carries a Conformity to it. Oh! Become able to answer this; *Lord, I denied all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and lived Godlily, and Soberly, and Righteously in the World*. Become able to answer this; *Lord, It was my Study to acknowledge thee, in all my ways, and in all the ways of thy Appointment*. Be able to answer this; *Lord, It was my Study, to bring*
forth

forth some Good Fruits, of all the Means which thou didst Employ for my Good. Become able to answer this; Lord, It was my Study to do Good to my Neighbour; and be a Blessing in all Relations. Become able to answer this; Lord, It was my Study to spend my Time well, and therein to lay up Good for Eternity. Every such Answer is worth a thousand Worlds!

Thirdly. In order hereto, that we may have Desirable Answers to make unto the Demands of God, we must now bring our selves under a Self-Examination. By a Self-Examination, become Resolved and Informed of such Things about your selves, as every Wise Man will Exceedingly enquire after. In Examining our selves, make Two Demands upon our selves; and make True Answers to the Demands. First, Let this be Demanded; *What have I been doing all this while?* This Complaint, Oh! Let it not be made of us; Jer. VIII. 6. No Man repented him of his Wickedness, saying, *What have I done?* We are advised, Consider your ways. 'Tis the Advice of old agreed upon, *Let us search and try our ways.* 'Tis the Advice of Heaven to us, *Ponder the Path of thy Feet.* When we demand it of our selves, *What have been our ways?* The Answer must be full of Contrition, full of Confusion, full of

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of Self-Abhorrence, and Self-Abasement. Lord, I have denied the God that is above! Lord, I acknowledge my Iniquity, and my Sin ever before me. Father, I have sinned against Heaven and in thy Sight. Secondly. Let this be Demanded; *What am I now?* There never was a more Important Counsel than that; 2 Cor. XIII. 5. *Prove your own selves.* Oh! make a Tryal of your State. Commune with your Hearts, till you find out, whether you have New Hearts, and with a saving Change wrought in them, you have a Bias for God imprinted on your Hearts. Demand it, and be not put off without an Answer to it; *Is my Soul so Quickened from above, that the Fear of God, and the Faith of His CHRIST has a Prædominant Influence upon me? Is GOD more to me, than the World? Is all CHRIST Precious to me? Is all Sin Odious to me? Is my Walk and my very Heart Regulated by the Eye of God upon it?* Souls, don't remain any longer Ignorant, whether you are in good Terms with God or no? Ignorant, whether God be Reconciled unto you? Ignorant, what will become of you in the Eternal World. Alas, It may be feared, That if the Demand be put unto a Multitude of People, *Have you done any thing to assure a part in the Heavenly World?—the*

Answer

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Answer must be, None at all ! None at all !
O wretched People they, who in these
Things under the Demands of God, shall
not answer a Word !

II. Let no People be any longer *Unresolved*, what *Answer* to make unto the Demands of the Glorious GOD, about what they *Intend now to do*. GOD now demands of our People, *What will you do ? Who, where, or what shall be your GOD ? Oh !* Let it not be so, that a People not yet *Resolved* upon a *Life of Piety*,—will *not answer a Word*.

A Business of Infinite Concernment, now to be prosecuted in the *Auditory*. In the Name of the Glorious GOD, it is to be demanded of all our People, whether they will now *Resolve* upon the *Service of God* and a *Life of Piety* ? No longer must this All-concerning Matter be left at an *Uncertainty* : But, O our Gospellized People, it is now expected, that you become *Resolved*. Some furious *Bigots* have made themselves famous by urging this, *For God or for Baal* to engage the Resolution of a Deluded People, to abett their *Schismatical Impositions*. Ridiculous *Bigotry* !— As if all the People were *Worshippers of Baal*, who do not worship the Great GOD with the *Liturgies* and the *Ceremonies*, with which the *Impose*

have made a *Schism* in the *Catholick Church* of our SAVIOUR! The Expression may be a thousand times more proper for the present Occasion. I say not, will you be for GOD, or *Baal*? But I say, Will you be for GOD, and CHRIST, and Heaven? Or will you be for the *erving of diverse Lusts*, and *walking after the Course of this World*? GOD who *searches the Hearts* of Men, will take Notice, what *Answer* is formed in your *Hearts*, unto His Demands upon you.

My Friends; I wish it may awaken you, when I tell you, That such Sermons as you are now address'd withal, are very *Ripening Sermons*. The *Sermons* that bring the Grand Concern of *Resolved Piety* to a Point: The *Sermons* that oblige an explicit Consent unto the *Resolutions of Piety*, which Conversion and Salvation turns upon: Such *Sermons* will apace *Ripen* the Hearers of them: Either they *Ripen* them that they are shew'd upon to become the Children of God, or they *Ripen* them for a Damnation that slumbers not. Souls; If you give no Attention to such *Sermons*, or if they make no Impression on you, there is a tremendous Danger lest the grieved Spirit of GOD withdraw from you, and give you up to *Perpetual Blindness* and *Hardness* and *Indifferen-*

difference. If you will not *Resolve* now to come into the *Life of God*, there is an amazing Danger, lest God *Resolve* to cast you off for ever, and swear in His Wrath against you, That He will never speak unto you any more, or help you to mind what He speaks. I am now doing the Work of a *Barnabas*, of whom we read, *Act. XI. 23.* He Exhorted them all, that with **FULL PURPOSE of HEART**, they would cleave unto the Lord. And in the prosecution of it,

First. The Demands of the Glorious **GOD** are to be set before you. The Demands are those Ancient ones; *Josh. XXIV. 15.* *Chuse you this Day, whom you will serve.* You shall have the Demands, yet more particularly, and so more Intelligibly, set before you. It is demanded; *Are you willing to live no longer unto your selves, but make it the main Design of your Lives, to please the Great GOD, in a continual Course of Obedience unto Him?* It is demanded; *Are you willing to have God alone set up in the Throne of your Souls, and place upon the Great GOD the Love, and the Trust, and the Joy, which you have heretofore placed upon the Creatures, which you have set up as Idols there?* It is demanded; *Are you willing to rely on the Mediation of your **SACRIFICE** for a Reconciliation with GOD?* wil-

ling, to wait upon your SAVIOUR for Direction and Assistance in all the Paths of Righteousness? willing to discern your Happiness in every Thing that helps you to Resemble that Glorious and altogether Lovely One? What is now waited for, and O sollicitated Souls, How long has a God waiting to be Gracious, been waiting for this? 'Tis, That you be a Willing People. Oh! Let it not be said, *The People answered not a Word.* But let all our People unite in this Answer,— My God, I am willing; thou hast made me willing; I am Resolv'd upon it, That thou shalt be my GOD; thy CHRIST shall be my SAVIOUR; and thy Religion shall be the Business of my Life. Briefly, The Resolutions of Piety demanded of you, are so summed up; Psal. CXIX. 94. *I am thine, save me; I seek thy Precepts.*

Secondly. You are to be Instructed, how the Resolutions of Piety are to be wisely, fitly, piously taken up. Harken to some Admonitions of Piety, which are to give a due Shape unto the Resolutions of it. First. It is to be supposed, That you Resolve Considerately. Indeed, the Resolutions of Piety admit of no Deliberation. 'Tis a Blasphemous Trespas upon Piety, to Deliberate whether it should be Resolv'd upon. It is Immediately, Immediately, without the least Hesitation, to be

be Resolved upon. But yet that *Servant* of GOD was one who dealt *Prudently*, in proceeding so; Psal. CXIX. 59. *I thought on my ways, and I turned.* You will Think what you have to do, in a *Life of Piety*, & Think what you have to move you unto the doing of it. Secondly. You will *Resolve* nothing in your *own Strength*: If you do, there will be no *Strength* in the *Resolutions*. Vain Man, Imagining thy self able to perform thy own *Resolutions*, Thou mayst *Resolve* much, but thou wilt *Perform* nothing. There is a Clause of more than ordinary Significancy, in the *Resolutions of Piety*; even that, Phil. IV. 13. *Thro' CHRIST who Strengthens me.* In the *Covenant of Grace*, there is a *Promise of Grace* to keep the *Covenant*. Every *Purpose* of ours, must be with an *Eye* to that *Promise*. Otherwise, it will be to no purpose. When we *Resolve* to *Glorify God*, our meaning must be, *I desire my SAVIOUR, to work in me both to will and to do, that so I may Glorify God.* Thirdly. When you *Resolve* the Thing that is Good, you must be armed against the *Discouragements* which the *Resolutions* may meet withal. He that *Resolves* a *Life of Devotion*, must look for a *Life of Temptation*. Follower of God, Thou must be an Overcomer. Who is the Overcomer? He is

is one whose *Resolutions of Piety* are never *Overcome*: He is one who can *Overcome* all the *Discouragements* that may assault his *Resolutions*. Resolved Christian, Be of a Good Heart. The word of Command unto thee, is that; 2 Tim. II. 3. *Endure Hardness, as a good Souldier of Jesus Christ. The Flesh will cry, Master, spare thy self. But the Flesh must be denied. The World will fawn or frown upon thee. But the World must be renounced. The Devil will vex thee with his Wiles. But thy Heart must not be turn'd back, tho' thou art broken in the Place of Dragons. Dark Dispensations of Providence are to be met withal. But the Horror of Darknes must not keep thee out of the Path of the Righteous. O our Evangelized People, Are you yet Resolved at this rate; Oh! Why, why should it be still said, The People answered not a Word?*

Thirdly. You are to be informed, What *Resolutions of Piety* are in a more peculiar manner to be urged upon you. My Neighbours, There shall be nothing proposed now to be *Resolved* with you, but what you shall own to be your *Duty*. A *Flaming Preacher*, that is within every one of your Souls, will joyn with me, and will with the Voice in which *the God of Glory Thunders*, force you
to

to own upon every Proposal, *This is the Will of God!* And, O Souls, will you be so deaf to Thunder, as to doubt whether you shall not presently *Resolve* upon these Things? None of you can dare to doubt whether these *Resolutions of Piety*, are not what the God who made you, does now call you to.

It is your *Duty*, and Oh! how much your *Interest*, presently, presently, to *Do that*, which if it be found *Undone*, when you come to *Dye*, you are *for ever Undone*. Would you know, what is *That*? It is thus described unto you Psal. XVI. 2. *Thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord. Resolve then, This Day, will I Retire and Repair to a Glorious CHRIST, as my Sacrifice on the Cross, my Advocate in the Heavens. This Day will I Re-sign my self up unto the Spirit of my Saviour, that He may Enter me, and Possess me, and render me a Temple of God. Oh! Delay it not.*

Will you *This Day* come to that *Resolution*; *I will every Day Converse with the Word of God*? I am sure, 'Tis your *Duty* to do so. You are so pointed unto it; Psal. CXIX. 97. *O how I love thy Law! It is my Meditation every Day. Will you this Day come to that Resolution? There shall not a Day pass me, without my going alone to pour out my Soul, in*

Secret

Secret Prayer before the Lord. This I am sure, is your *Duty*. 'Tis positively Enjoined; Matth. VI. 6.—*Enter into thy Closet, shut thy Door, pray to thy Father who is in Secret.* Will you this Day come to that *Resolution*? *Whatever I see to be a Sin, I will Abhor it, I will Avoid it.* I am certain, This is no other than your *Duty*. It is the Injunction of Heaven; 1 Theff. V. 22. *Abstain from all appearance of Evil.* Household Piety must be also *Resolv'd* upon. Oh! That *Joshua's Resolution* may be this Day universally come into. And one Thing more; Will you *Resolve* this Day, *I will prepare for, and approach to, Communion with the Lord, at His Holy Table*? You cannot be insensible, that this is your *Duty* too. Your *Dying Lord* said, *This do.* While you defer This, you make a very poor Provision for a *Dying Hour*; you provide Regret, and Remorse, and Anguish, for a *Dying Hour*. I am afraid, I am afraid, The so general Neglect of this *Duty*, is too broad a Symptom of People not sufficiently yet Resolved upon a *Life of Piety*. O our Evangelized People, Are you yet *Resolved* of these things? God forbid that it should still be said, *The People answered not a Word.*

Fourthly and Finally; You are to be argued withal; and the *Expostulations* are to be

be used, that will move you to the *Resolutions of Piety*, if you are not still *Dead in your Sins*; if you don't *Resolve to Dye in your Sins*. When the Prince to whom the Roman Ambassador applied himself, would have put off his demanded *Resolution*, the Ambassador with his Sword made a Circle about him, and cogently said *Intra hunc*,—Syr, You must *Resolve* before you *Stir*. The Glorious GOD is now demanding the *Resolution* of our People, *Whether He shall be their God*, and *Whether they will yet live unto Him*? Look on the Wall of this House, as a Line about you; and let me say unto you, *Soul, You must Resolve, before you Stir!* It must now be brought unto that Point; Heb. III. 7. *To Day if you will hear His Voice, harden not your Hearts* My Neighbours, Harken to me, while I *Reason with you before the Lord*. Harken to the Demands of God. God Sees, God Hears, God Minds, what *Answer* your Souls do give. And shall it be still said, *The People answered not a Word!*

Demand I. The Things about which you are to be *Resolved*; Will these Things ever be *otherwise* than what they are? These Things, are they not *Just Now*, what they will be *For ever*? Will the Glorious GOD
ever

ever be more worthy of your *Homage*, than He is *Just Now*? Will CHRIST ever be more Amiable? Will SIN ever be more Detestable? Will this WORLD ever be more Contemptible? Will the *Place of Torment* ever be more Formidable? Or the *Heavenly Places* ever be more full of *Blessings*? Then, why should you not, *Just Now*, without any more ado, *Resolve* in the ways of *Piety* to treat these Objects as they ought to be treated? Oh! Let it not be so, that the *People answer not a Word!*

Demand II. What is it, that you are to be *Resolved* upon, when the Service of God is the Thing propounded unto you? The Thing propounded is, *Whether the GOD, in whom you Live and Move and have your Being, has any Claim to any Service from you?* 'Tis, *Whether it be good for you to draw near unto the God, who is the Fountain of all Good?* The Thing propounded is; *Whether the only SAVIOUR be more worthy of Regards from you, than a Bloody Destroyer?* 'Tis, *In whose Hands is it best for you to put your selves; Those of a JESUS, or those of the Devil?* The Thing propounded, is; *Whether an Immortal Soul be not more to be cared for, than a Body that is mouldering into Dust? Whether the Everlasting Wrath of God in Hell, be not*
more

more Dreadful, than a few short Straits and Wants upon Earth? Whether Holiness leading to Happiness, be not rather to be chosen, than base Wickedness, which has Destruction and Misery, in the ways thereof? All this is Implied, when Piety is propounded. But, what? will it require any more Time for you to Resolve about such Things as these? Oh! Let it not be so, that the People answer not a Word.

Demand III. What an Exalted, & Proclaimed Folly, will it be, if you are not forthwith Resolved upon the Service of GOD? What? For a Man to be at a loss, Whether a Perpetual Night be not preferable to the Return of the Sweet Light in the Season thereof? To be at a loss, Whether a bitter Slavery should not be preferr'd before Liberty, yea, Dignity, & all Easy Circumstances? To be at a loss, Whether painful Diseases, grievous Languishments, must not be preferr'd before Ease and Health? Who but a Mad-man can be at a loss about such Things? But how Egregious the Folly, and how much greater the Madness, of those, who are at a loss, Whether the Favour of God, which Piety will have shining upon it, should not be preferr'd before Chains of Darknes? How long will it be before you Resolve; After

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you have already had so many Sevens of Years to think upon it? After you have enjoy'd such Means to help you to Right Judgment? After you have had so much Experience to convince you, that nothing without God can Satisfy you? Oh! Let it not be so, that the *People answer not a Word.*

Demand IV. While you continue not yet *Resolved* upon the Service of God, what a Vile, Shameless, Horrid *Indignity*, do you put upon Him? Would you bring a Beggar, yea, a Traitor, before a Mighty King, and ask, *Which has the better Title to the Crown?* But, how much worse is it for you to ask; *Which had I best Obey, God or the Flesh? Which had I best follow, CHRIST or the World? Which had I best have, the Holy Spirit, or the Devil, dwelling in me?* Is it not a Crime to ask such a Thing? What Scorn cast upon our Creator, and Redeemer? Oh! To sit so in the *Seat of the Scorners!* To make such *Monstrous Comparisons!* Till you *Resolve* upon *Piety*, you say, These are Things, which want clearing with you. But can you find in your Hearts to ask this any more? Oh! Let it not be said, *The People answered not a Word!*

Demand V. What is the *Real Question*, when the Service of God is to be Resolved upon?

upon? The *Question* in Reality, is; Will you be a Child of God, and come to Inherit all things? The *Question* in Reality, is; Will you be United and Espoused unto the King of Glory? The *Question* in Reality, is; Will you have the Angels of Heaven for your Guardians, and ere long be brought unto a Consort with those Morning-Stars? The *Real Question*, is; Will you be delivered from a Devouring Fire, and from Everlasting Burnings? And will you come to Fulness of Joy in the presence of God, and Pleasures at His Right Hand for evermore? But can these Things be *Questioned*? Until you *Resolve* upon Piety, you *Question* such Things. But now my *Question* is, How can you make such a *Question*? Oh! Let it not be said, *The People answered not a Word.*

Demand VI. Are you not a Dying? Don't you see People Dying about you every Day? And, *Vain Mortals*, can you exclude yourselves from the Number? Will the *Dead Things*, on your *Tables*, & in your *Garments*, give you no lively Hints, that you are yourselves also to Dye? Will not your *Death* come speedily? How long is a *Weavers Shuttle* passing an *Hands-breadth*? May not your *Death* come Suddenly? Do you know, what a Day may bring forth? But Oh! how Unprepared for a Dying Hour, while Unresolved for

Living unto God? For you to *Dye* so, will it not be to *Dye Unsanctified*, and so to *Dye Unjustified*; and then, to *Dye* and fall into the Hands of *Divels*; to *Dye*, and meet with a *Death*, which will be but the *Trap-door* of *Hell*? Oh! *Death* infinitely to be deprecated! Can you bear the Thoughts of *Dying* so wretchedly? You cannot but think, That while you are *Unresolved* for the Service of God, He will count you for His *Enemies*. But can you think it any other than the most horrid Venture that ever was made, for you to venture dying in the Condition of those, concerning whom God the *Judge* of *all*, will say, *Let those my Enemies be brought before me!* And is not that *Portion of the Wick-*
ed, which is to be assign'd unto the *Enemies* of God, a *Portion* to be Trembled at? Are you willing to undergo that *Strange Punishment*, which is reserved in a *Future State* for these *Workers of Iniquity*? If you will not before that come into them, will not a *Death-bed* force you, and fright you into the *Resolutions of Piety*? Did you ever see a *Dying Man*, but what approved of such *Resolutions*? Yea, Did the Approaches of *Death* never terrify you into something of them? Or, if you now felt your *Death* approaching, in your *Blood* boiling, your *Breath* fail-

failing, your Sight going away, & the cold Sweats coming upon you, would you not now declare, O Great GOD, I *Resolve to serve thee, if thou wilt now spare me!* But how little of *Sincerity* commonly in the *Resolutions* of a *Death-bed*? O *Sleeping Sinners*; Can you *Dream* that God will accept of such *Deceitful Things*? Or, Are you sure, that you shall have the *Liesure* of a *Death-bed* allowed unto you? Sure, that after you have abused a *Space of Repentance* given you by God, He will afford you the *Space* which you presume upon; Or the *Grace* to make use of it? What can you say to these things? Must it be still so, *The People answered not a Word?*

Demand VII. Then yet once more will I speak on the Behalf of God, and of *Piety*. Durst you *Resolve* upon that which is *Contrary* to the Service of God? Can you have the *Confidence* to speak out, and say, I *Resolve to serve Sin and Satan still?* *Confidently and Impudently* say, I *Resolve still to continue in Arms of Rebellion against the Almighty God, and to defy His Thunderbolts?* You must *Resolve* one, or t'her. Or, *In fine*, What must you *Resolve*, if you will not come into the *Resolutions of Piety?* Must you not *Resolve*, to be *Wicked* and incur all the

the *Wo's* of the *Wicked*? Must you not *Resolve*, to have the *Wrath* of God *abiding* on you, and fall into those *Hands*, which it is a *fearful Thing* to fall into? Must you not *Resolve*, to dwell with a *Devouring Fire*, and with *Everlasting Burnings*? O *Resolute Sinner*; Canst thou upon *Second Thoughts* take up such desperate *Resolutions*? Upon *Second Thoughts*, Methinks, there should no longer be this *Uncertainty* among us, *The People answered not a Word*. Certainly, There will now be some *Answer* made; and a *Right Answer*, a *Wise Answer*, a *Good Answer*; Even that *Answer*; Psal. CXIX. 60. *I make Haste, and I delay not, to keep thy Commandments.*

What is thus address'd unto **ALL PEOPLE**, is that which **YOUNG PEOPLE** are very peculiarly concerned in. My Address is now made unto an Auditory peculiarly consisting of such. And Oh! that the Arm of the Lord would now sling such a Stone into the *Conscience* of these, as to make them fall before the Conviction of God. **CHILDREN**, Give Attention. To set upon the *Service of God*, in the Practice of undissembled *Piety*; you all know, you all own, 'Tis what your *Eternal Happiness* depends upon. **YOUNG PEOPLE**, You
are

are every one of you convinced, That you must *Live unto God*, and *Live by the Faith of the Son of God*, and Live in a Consciencious Regard unto the MAXIMS of Glory to God in the Highest, and Good will towards Men, or else miss of the Blessings in Everlasting Life. Some of you are come to a Resolution in this awful Matter. They are unchangeably Resolved for the Service of God, and their SAVIOUR. They do Serve Him, and He will Save them; and, Children, Your steps will never decline from His ways. But I must freely tell you, It is to be feared, that many of you are to this Day, not sufficiently Resolved upon doing what you have to do that you may be saved. They are perhaps a little Disposed unto it, but not Resolved upon it; They are Pondering about it, but not Resolved upon it. They have their Thoughts upon it; & sometimes they think, Well, They will shortly do that which may secure their Everlasting Peace. Anon, their Purposes are cut off, & the Thoughts of their Hearts. They are buried in their Businesses, or in their Diversions, the vain Amusements of this World, and they do nothing to Purpose for an Happiness in a Better World, because they are not fully Purposed what to do. The Greatest Concern in the
World,

World, they are too much *Unresolved*, and *Unconcerned* for it. They leave it at woful *Uncertainties*; *Death* surprizes them. They *Dye* before they come to a *Resolution*. They *give up the Ghost*, and *where are they?*——

What is now urged for, is, *A Resolution* for the Service of God; even for **EARLY PIETY**. Oh! That before we part, there may be such a *Resolution* formed in you: A *Resolution* that will make your *Calling and Election* sure; A *Resolution*, which may from *this Moment* fix you in a good State for *Eternity*.

A Life of Serious Religion!—Methinks I now see a **YOUNG MAN**, rendring himself the *Delight of the wiser Mankind*, by coming into it. You shall see the Description of him; the *Lovely Pourtraiture*.

He is a **YOUNG MAN** well satisfied, that a *Religious Life*, or a Life devoted unto the Service of God, is what must be followed. He looks upon a *Religious Life*, as, *The One Thing that is needful*. His Thoughts are come to that Issue; *Psal. LXXIII. 28. It is good for me to draw near unto God*. His Objections against a *Religious Life*, are all Answered, Banished, Vanished: He is fully satisfied, That no *Delights* are comparable to those of a *Religious Life*; the ways whereof

are

are *Pleasant Ways*, and lead also to *Pleasures for evermore*. He is fully satisfied, That no *Riches* are comparable to those of a *Religious Life*; which gives a *Contented Mind*; and brings also to *Durable Riches*. He is fully satisfied, That there can be nothing so *Honourable* as a *Religious Life*: To Live *Religiously*, is to be a *King* and a *Priest* unto God. He is convinced, That a *Religious Life* is a most *Reasonable Thing*; That the Man who is not a *Saint*, is a *Bruit*; That he who is not a *Good Man*, does not shew himself a *Man*. He has a full *Conviction* upon him, that if he does not *Live Religiously*, he shall *Dye Eternally*; That a *Religious Life* must be maintained by every Man, who would not miss of *Everlasting Life*; That *without Holiness*, no Man shall see the Lord.

The YOUNG MAN is now determined for it; *Unalterably Determined*; *Inviolably Determined*. He is no longer at a loss, Whether he should pursue a *Religious Life* or no. He can say, with him; *Psalm LVII. 7. My Heart is fixed, O God, my Heart is fixed*. An *Efficacious Work* of God upon his *Heart*, has fixed him for a *Religious Life*. He is no longer *Wavering*; He *Hesitates* no longer; The *fixed Bent* of his *Mind*, is this; *I will be the LORDS; I will chuse the Things that please GOD;*

GOD; *I will make it the Work of my Life, to please and seek and serve the Glorious GOD.* He is now so fixed for a *Religious Life*, that nothing shall dissuade him from it; nothing seduce him. He shakes off the *Company* of the *Sinners* that would *Entice* him to *Evil-doing*; and says to them, *Depart from me, ye Evil-doers, for I will keep the Commandments of my GOD.* Should his dearest *Relatives* hang about his Neck to detain him from a *Religious Life*, he would *step over his Father*; and *throw his Mother to the Earth*; and bravely trample on all his *Relatives*; and count it a *Mercy* to be *Cruel* on such an *Occasion*. He will *Believe* on **CHRIST**; and nothing shall ever make him out of *Love* with his admirable Saviour. He will *Repent* of **SIN**; and nothing shall bring him to *Love* that worst of *Evils*. He will *Walk* with **GOD**; and *Stately in his Goings*, he will by nothing be *turned aside*. With a *Patient Continuance in Well-doing*, he will seek for the *Glory* of the *Divine Image* restored in him, the *Honour* of having this *Glory* confessed in him, an *Immortality* in Possession of this *Glory* and *Honour*; This he will do, until swallow'd up in *Life Eternal*. Resolved **YOUNG MAN**; Thy **GOD** is *Resolved*, That He will do *Wonders* for thee!

This,

This, this is the RESOLUTION, which I now do bespeak of you, My Children, and I do it with a most unspeakable Importunity. Oh! Harken to it!—

Let me have the Joy,— I know no greater Joy:— of seeing that you hearken to it. Supposing that I do so, I will propose to you an unexceptionable FORM which the RESOLUTION may be expressed in. Form it in such Terms as these;

Psal. CXIX. 57.

Thou art my Portion, O ETERNAL GOD?

I have Resolv'd, That I would keep thy Words.

You shall have a brief Paraphrase upon it.

‘ Gracious GOD, Assisted by thy Grace,
 ‘ [wherewith, O Quicken me from above!]
 ‘ I Mourn before thee for my chusing a
 ‘ Portion in the Things of *this World*, where-
 ‘ in I now see nothing but perpetual *Vanity*
 ‘ and *Vexation*; I revoke so foolish a Choice.
 ‘ The Choice and the Voice of my Renewed
 ‘ Mind, is this; Oh! Let my Portion, and my
 ‘ Blessedness lie, in my Living unto God; and
 ‘ in having thee, O Great GOD, for my GOD.
 ‘ An Employment for God, a Communion
 ‘ with God, and the Enjoyment of thy
 ‘ Conduct, O my SAVIOUR, to bring me
 ‘ home

' home unto God; and to be under the
 ' Shadow of *thy Wings*; This is the Chief
 ' Good, which my Soul now falls in withal.
 ' My GOD, *Whom have I in Heaven but*
 ' *Thee?* And let me desire nothing upon Earth
 ' besides thee; or what shall help me in See-
 ' ing and in Serving of thee. But, then,
 ' my Desire therefore is, That I may keep
 ' *thy Words*, and Understand, and Remem-
 ' ber, and Practise, the MAXIMS of PI-
 ' ETY, which are to be found in *thy Words*;
 ' and be Holy in all manner of Conversation.
 ' O my GOD, and my SAVIOUR, I en-
 ' treat of thee, to make me so.

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 in both Worlds, Happy to Eternal Ages.

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